



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520
OCT - 9 2012

Dear Senator Mikulski:

Thank you for your letter of September 14 concerning the security of our diplomatic missions around the world. We too mourn the tragic loss of our colleagues--Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods.

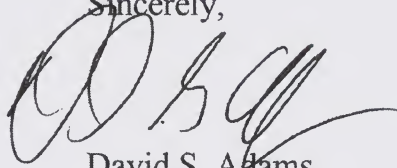
As a result of the recent events discussed in your letter, we have taken immediate measures to increase security at our diplomatic posts. At various posts in the region, these steps include: increased host country police or military elements outside of our facilities; additional presence of local guard forces and resources to enhance perimeter security and access control; additional Diplomatic Security Service personnel; and deployment of Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Security Teams (FAST teams).

We agree with your assessment that recent events require a thorough security review and have convened an official process to this end. On September 20, Secretary Clinton established an Accountability Review Board (ARB) which will be led by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and will include Admiral Michael Mullen, Catherine Bertini, Richard Shinnick, and Hugh Turner III. The ARB is charged with determining whether our security systems and procedures in Benghazi were appropriate to the environment when the decisions were made, whether those systems and procedures were properly implemented, and any lessons that may be relevant to our work around the world. We intend to share the ARB's findings and our response with the Congress, and would encourage you to withhold any final conclusions about the Benghazi attack until the committee can review the ARB's findings.

The Honorable
Barbara Mikulski,
United States Senate.

We hope this information is helpful to you. Congress has been and will continue to be a full partner with us in providing for the security of our diplomatic and development professionals overseas, just as Congress provides for our troops. We appreciate your commitment to the security of our overseas missions and look forward to working with you on this important effort. Please do not hesitate to let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. S. Adams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David S. Adams
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs